An aerial photograph of a village, likely in the Cotswolds, featuring a prominent church with a tall, pointed spire. The village is surrounded by lush green hills and fields, with several houses and buildings visible. The sky is overcast.

**PRESENTATION 3:
ELC Action Plan
Guidelines**

What are ELC Action Plans?

“The Framework for implementing the European Landscape Convention in England seeks to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of landscapes in England by providing a structure for Action Plans of partners and stakeholders.” **ELC Framework for Implementation in England**

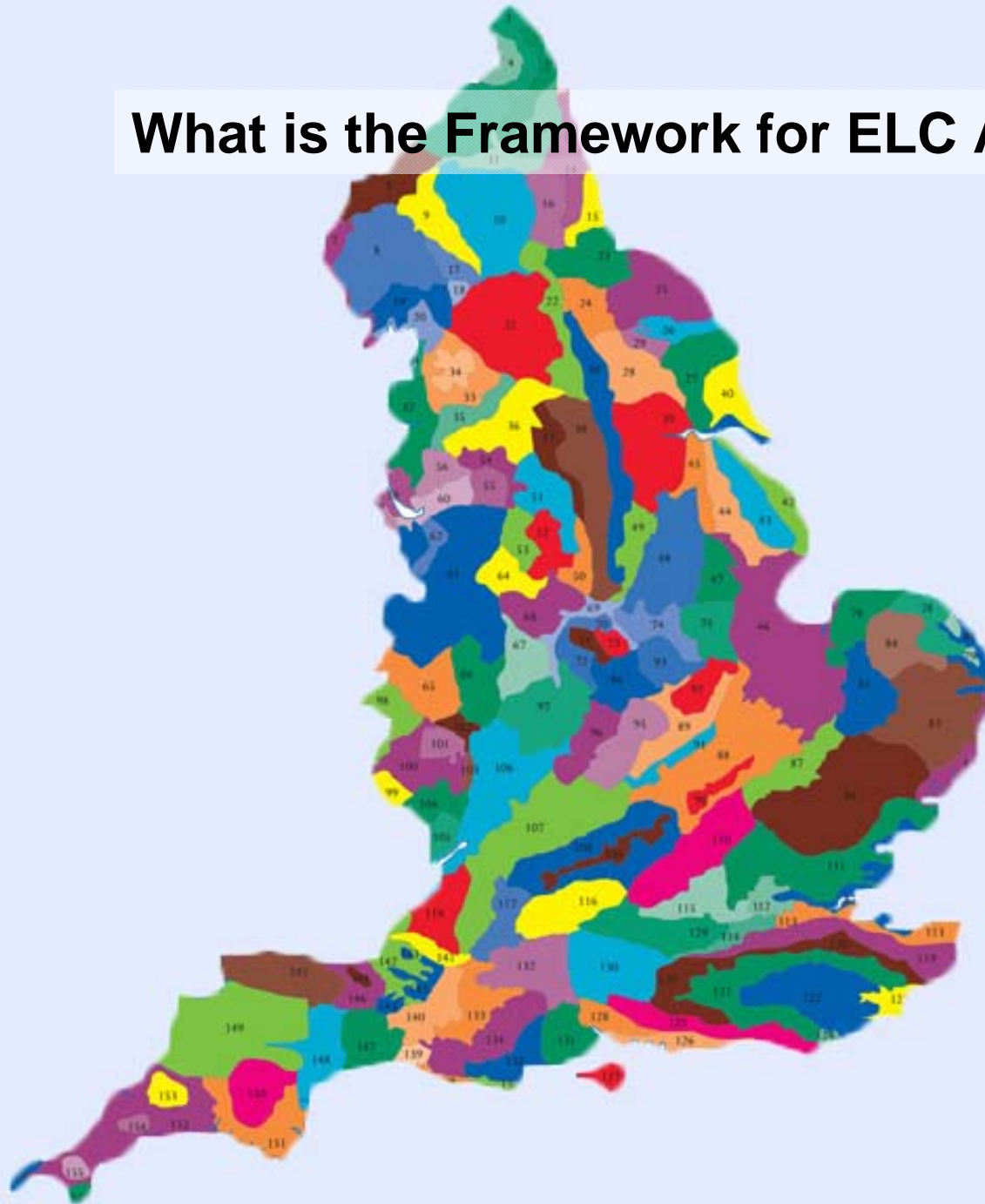
The preparation of Action Plans is the key vehicle through which the aims of the ELC will be implemented in England.

Defra CLG will issue ‘a call’ for ELC Action Plans to be produced.

The Role of an ELC Action Plan?

- Facilitate engagement with the ELC;
- Provide greater recognition of, and raise the profile of landscape within an organisation and associated partners and stakeholders;
- Improve performance leading to 'better' protected, managed and planned landscapes on the ground;
- Help organisations achieve their aims against key drivers (social, economic and environmental).

What is the Framework for ELC Action Plans?



Embedded in an understanding of landscape – It is NOT a Landscape Plan but a plan which sets out how an organisation engages with landscape.

Who can Prepare an ELC Action Plan?

Any organisation that can see the benefits of engaging with landscape;

- Organisations working at **all spatial scales** from national to local;
- In the spirit of the ELC – all landscapes everywhere – urban, peri-urban, rural, marine.

e.g. *Government departments, statutory agencies, national and regional bodies, local authorities, non governmental organisations, project or area-based organisations, training and educational establishments, utility companies, major landowners.*

Potential Role of an ELC Action Plan for Organisations with Different Degrees of Involvement with Landscape

Current Level of Engagement/ Involvement with Landscape	Purpose/Role of ELC Action Plan
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re affirm importance of landscape • Re-energise involvement with landscape within the organisation • Align activities with the ELC and landscape work of other bodies • Opportunity to co-ordinate existing work

Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen and advance the importance of landscape• Make links across the organisation regarding landscape• Raise awareness of the importance of landscape within the organisation
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the importance and potential benefits of landscape• Raises awareness of landscape within the organisation

What are the Outcomes of Preparing an ELC Action Plan?

FOR LANDSCAPE

- Ensure that landscape is thought about more in shaping policy;
- Embed landscape into decision-making at an early stage;
- Raise awareness of the importance of landscape within an organisation;
- Re-affirm, refocus and raise the bar of involvement in Landscape.

FOR ORGANISATION

Look for 'ways in' how can engagement help them.

What are the Benefits of Preparing an ELC Action Plan?

- Help an organisation achieve against key drivers;
- Establish cross- sector links within an organisation with landscape being an integrating concept;
- Identify wider partnerships and opportunities for stakeholder involvement;
- Audit the existing activity of an organisation against ELC objectives and where appropriate develop new areas of activity.

Establishing the Themes and Priorities for an ELC Action Plan

Use the Articles of the Convention as an organising structure;

Select those themes/headings which are most relevant to their aims, objectives and priorities.

The Articles of the ELC can be Translated into Ten Actions Appropriate to ELC Action Plans:

1. Recognise landscapes in law;
2. Integrate landscape into relevant policies (regional, town planning, cultural, environmental, agricultural, social, economic, and other policies);
3. Identify and analyse landscapes - describing their character and forces and pressures acting on them;
4. Assess landscapes – considering what contributes to and detracts from their quality and character;

5. Define objectives for landscape quality (after public consultation);
6. Protect, manage, and plan landscapes;
7. Monitor what is happening to landscapes;
8. Increase awareness of the value of landscape;
9. Promote landscape training and education.
10. European co-operation

Example 1: Headings Followed by the Natural England ELC Action Plan

Natural England ELC Action Plan Themes	ELC Articles
Improving performance within the current legal and regulatory framework;	Article 5a
Influencing future legislation, regulation, advice, including contributing to gap analysis;	Article 5a,5b, 6E
Improving the understanding of landscape character and dynamics, and the monitoring of change and trends;	Article 6c
Engaging people through comprehensive and accessible awareness and understanding activities, as well as through promotion, education and training;	Article 6a and 6b
Sharing experience and best practice.	Article 8

Example 2: Themes Followed by the English Heritage ELC Action Plan

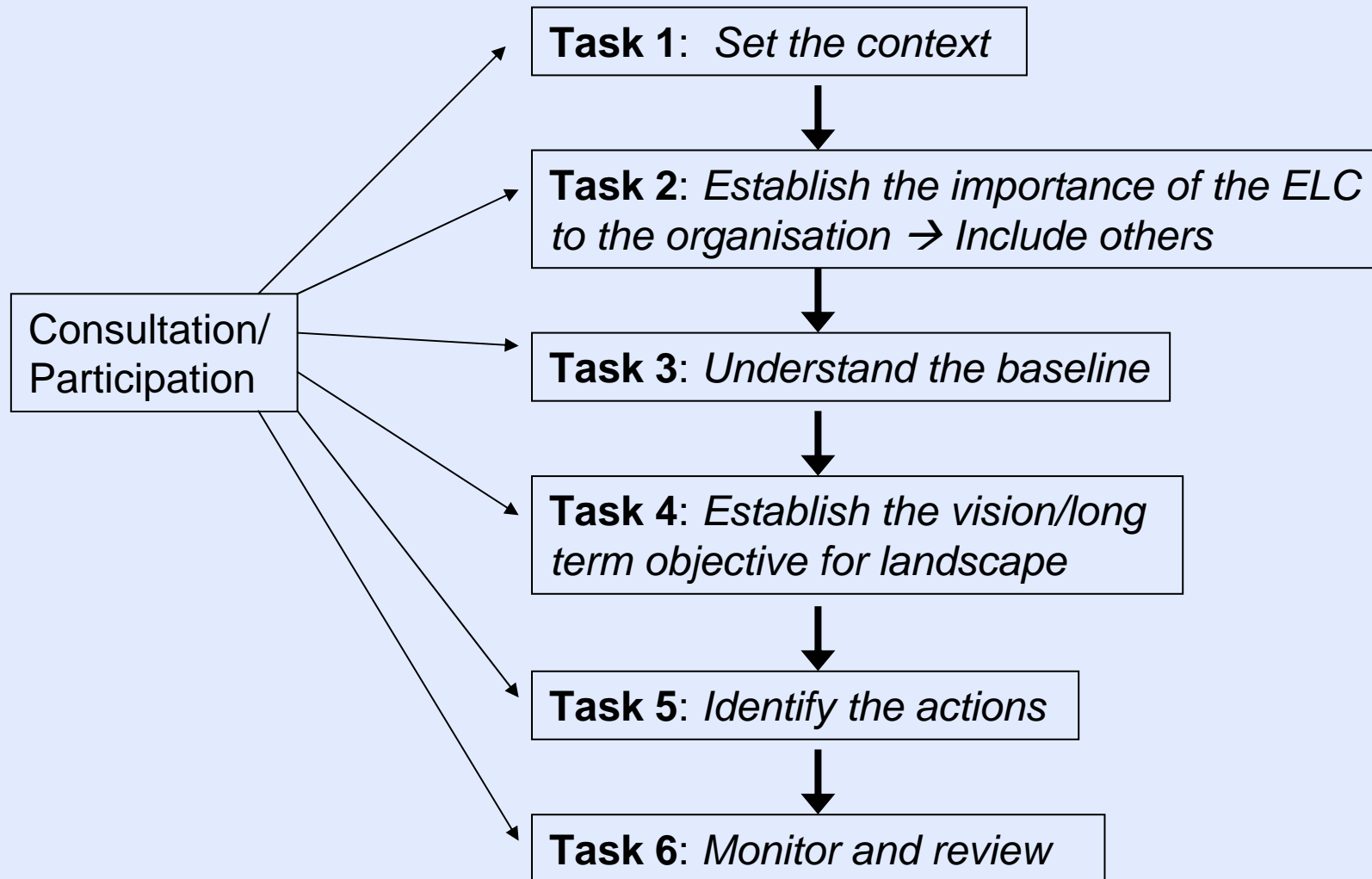
English Heritage ELC Action Plan Themes	ELC Articles
Adhering to the philosophy of the ELC	ELC Articles 1–3
Meeting the ELC’s General Provisions	ELC Articles 4,5,6
Contributing to national landscape policy	ELC Articles 5b-d
Developing specific measures for historic aspects of the landscape	ELC Articles 6a-d
Working with partners	ELC Articles 3-5, 6e, 7-9,11

Process for Preparing an ELC Action Plan

Key points for preparing an ELC Action Plan

- A document fit for purpose, aligned with specific needs of the organisation;
- Follow the structure of the Convention's Articles and/or Defra's Framework for Implementation (selecting themes with most relevance to the organisation);
- Adopt the ELC's holistic integrated definition of landscape;
- Establish the 'baseline' – what is in place already;
- Define the vision or long term objectives;
- Identify actions to achieve the vision/objectives;
- Monitor and evaluate what has been achieved.

Tasks for Preparing an ELC Action Plan



What Should ELC Action Plans Achieve?

- Key people within the organisation operating at all levels aware of the importance of landscape 'as a context and consequence' and the existence of the Action Plan;
- Links between different sectors engaged in landscape established;
- An agreed vision/objective for engagement with landscape;
- A clear set of actions;
- Ownership of plan within organisation at the highest level and specific ownership of individual actions;
- A timescale, resources and process for implementing actions*.

CASE STUDY: National Forest Company ELC Action Plan

Follows the format of the NE Action Plan – 5 themes;

- improving performance;
- improving understanding of landscape character and dynamics;
- engaging people;
- sharing experience and best practice.

Considers that the ELC provides an overarching framework which can help shape the future direction of the Forest's development;



Improving the Understanding of Landscape Character and Dynamics

Baseline

Describes current position of LCA and HLCA.

2008/2009 Action

Develop landscape connectivity system to focus landscape enhancement and management;

Promote LCA and forestry design guidance to landowners and agents to guide new woodland;

Develop landscape visualisation tools to demonstrate and assess effect of woodland creation on landscape character and communicate to stakeholders.

Some Discussion Points

- Flexibility not a straight jacket?
- Ensuring good Action Plans lead to good landscapes?
- Influencing and engaging the right organisations?
- Consistent guidelines V diversity of organisations – do they need to be more targeted?
- Collective role of Action Plans – monitoring?